

# THE SIKH MANIFESTO



Chant the Name **Waheguru** **Saif**  
Race Equality Student of Life Disciplined  
Don't Smoke **Compassionate** **Protector**  
Selfless Service See God In All  
Honest Fidelity **No Discrimination**  
**One God** **I am a Sikh**  
Work Hard Help the Disadvantaged **Brave**  
**Fearless** **Humble**  
Gender Equality **Respects all Paths**  
Meditate on God Exalted Attitude Everyone is Equal  
Don't Drink Distinct Appearance

## 2015 - 2020

Produced by THE SIKH NETWORK

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## ENDORSEMENTS & SUPPORT



"The contribution of the British Sikh community in all aspects of public life here in the UK is second to none. British Sikhs play an essential part in modern day British life, and are a core group who enrich our multicultural society. I am proud of our British Sikh population, who are successful across all sectors including arts and media to business, health and the economy. I think the 'Sikh Manifesto 2015-20', written by the Sikh Federation (UK) demonstrates the commitment of British Sikhs to be actively involved with the political process, and is a great way of empowering the British Sikh community." **Rt Hon Ed Miliband MP, Leader of the Labour Party**



"The British Sikh community's energy and devotion in campaigning to drive forward our shared values of fairness, compassion and tolerance is a priceless contribution to the modern Britain we live in today. The Sikh Manifesto is a further example of this conscientious commitment. I warmly welcome the Sikh Federation's ambition to encourage the British Sikh community to engage with politics at all levels and I congratulate the Federation for all the hard work it has already done to increase the awareness and importance of social and political activism within the British Sikh community." **Rt Hon Nick Clegg Deputy Prime Minister, Leader of the Liberal Democrats**



"The Scottish National Party and Scottish Government celebrate the contribution made by Scotland's confident and integral Sikh community and welcomes greater participation in all areas of public life. I am delighted to have an excellent working relationship with the Sikh community in Scotland. The SNP is committed to political and constitutional reform and shares the Sikh Federation's vision of enabling and encouraging greater inclusion, participation and representation." **Rt Hon Nicola Sturgeon MSP First Minister, Leader of the Scottish National Party**



"There can surely be no higher tribute paid to the contribution of Sikhism to this country than that it has become synonymous with being hard working, tolerant, and respectful. The Sikh community provides an excellent model for the successful integration of two cultures. UKIP shares the core Sikh values of defending the weak and innocent, whilst striving to promote truth and justice at all times." **Nigel Farage MEP, Leader of UKIP**



"I have read the Manifesto prepared by the Sikh Network after extensive consultation with the Sikh community and am pleased to see positive participation in the democratic process of British politics in a progressive manner. I shall continue to work with Sikhs and look forward to developments with the Sikh Manifesto with a keen interest." **The Lord Mike Whitby of Harborne in the City of Birmingham Conservative Peer**



"The Sikh Federation (UK) has championed the Sikh Manifesto through the Sikh Network. We see this as a historic document for UK Sikhs and a reference point for Sikhs across the Diaspora. It highlights key concerns and challenges faced by the British Sikh community and provides a clear message to politicians of all parties of the key priorities for the next five years." **Bhal Amrik Singh Chairman Sikh Federation (UK)**



"I applaud and congratulate all those who have participated in the compilation of the Sikh Manifesto. It is a testament to their tremendous effort, dedication and commitment to get to this stage." **Akaal Singh Sidhu Barrister and Conservative candidate for Deputy Crime and Police Commissioner, West Midlands**



"The foundations of the Sikh faith are laid upon equality, social justice and good citizenship. I welcome and support the Sikh Manifesto for its endorsement of these key Sikh tenets through its emphasis on issues which affect the British Sikh community." **Dr Opinderjit Kaur Takhar, Senior Lecturer at University of Wolverhampton**



"The Sikh Manifesto and Sikh Network will define the future of British Sikhs and how we engage with mainstream politics. This is a unique opportunity for all British Sikhs stand in unity, young and old to address many outstanding issues facing the Sikh community to continue to strengthen our unique identity and integration." **Jas Singh ACMA, Managing Director**

"I became the MP for Gloucester in 2001 I hoped and prayed that I would be a part of a growing Sikh community in the British Parliament. Sadly I now find myself in the lonely position of being the last surviving Sikh to have been a Labour UK Parliamentarian. We must fight to restore Sikh representation to the highest levels of public life in the UK to ensure the Sikh voice is heard." **Parmjit Singh Dhanda Labour MP for Gloucester 2001-10, the first Sikh UK government minister**

"The Sikh Council UK welcomes the collective efforts to produce the first ever Sikh manifesto as we approach the May 2015 General Elections. We would encourage all sections of the Sikh Community to ensure that all eligible people are not only encouraged to register to vote but also actually do vote for candidates that can contribute towards meeting the aspirations of the British Sikh Community." **Gurmeh Singh Kandola MBE Secretary General Sikh Council UK**

"The Sikh Manifesto is based on egalitarian Sikhi principles of equality, respect for human rights and a level playing field for all. These are also the British values which unite diverse cultures and religions as one nation. As such, the Manifesto is a model for other British minority communities also." **Gurmeh Singh Ret'd Principal Civil Servant, SEWA**

"We want Sikh issues to be taken seriously by the Government and the quiet child not ignored. It is doubly difficult for a Sikh woman to get into the House of Commons because of layers of discrimination they have to endure. It effectively puts them off entering politics. We congratulate the Sikh Network." **Mrs Balvinder K Saund J.P., Sikh Women's Alliance UK**

"The Sikh Manifesto is an historic achievement that future generations will come to appreciate and much of the credit goes to individuals that have come forward to be part of the Sikh Network. The Sikh Federation (UK) will work closely with the Sikh Network to monitor progress." **Dabinderjit Singh OBE, CPFA, Principal Adviser to the Sikh Federation (UK)**

"The Sikh Manifesto is a logical follow up on the 8 point Sikh Agenda that was launched in 2001. It makes it more clear what we expect from those politicians. It will help the Sikh community to make an informed choice when voting." **Harjinder Singh, Sikh Activist, Columnist**

"The Sikh Manifesto is a constructive, positive and forward thinking document. It not only sets out some of the key aspirations of the Sikh community at large but also provides an invaluable tool for politicians and political parties to better engage with the Sikh community." **Parmjit Singh Gill Former Liberal Democrat MP for Leicester South**

"The Sikh Manifesto is a great initiative, it highlights the needs of the Sikh community and will engage more Sikhs in politics, especially the youth and future generations. I simply call on all to really use this Manifesto in the election." **Kam Singh Sikh Youth Activist & TV Presenter**

A special thank you to all the UK Gurdwaras, Sikh Organisations, prominent Sikhs and individuals who have contributed and supported this Manifesto



# CONTENT INSIDE

INTRODUCTION \_\_\_\_\_ 1

SECTION 1- MORE EFFECTIVE REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENT \_\_\_\_\_ 5

SECTION 2 - SEPARATE ETHNIC MONITORING OF SIKHS \_\_\_\_\_ 7

SECTION 3 - STATUTORY CODE OF PRACTICE ON THE SKS AND SIKH TURBAN \_\_\_\_\_ 9

SECTION 4 - ACTION AGAINST PERPETRATORS OF GROOMING AND FORCED CONVERSIONS \_\_\_\_\_ 11

SECTION 5 - NETWORK OF STATE FUNDED SIKH ETHOS SCHOOLS \_\_\_\_\_ 13

SECTION 6 - MONUMENT IN LONDON TO HIGHLIGHT SIKH SACRIFICES IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR \_\_\_\_\_ 15

SECTION 7 - PRESSURE ON FRANCE TO STOP DISCRIMINATION AGAINST TURBAN WEARING SIKHS \_\_\_\_\_ 16

SECTION 8 - INDEPENDENT PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO UK GOVERNMENT ACTIONS IN THE LEAD UP TO AND AFTER THE 1984 SIKH GENOCIDE \_\_\_\_\_ 17

SECTION 9 - UN-LED INQUIRY INTO THE 1984 SIKH GENOCIDE \_\_\_\_\_ 19

SECTION 10 - APPLICATION OF SELF DETERMINATION TO THE SIKHS \_\_\_\_\_ 21



# We have given so much, we deserve better. . .

## INTRODUCTION

In less than seventy years the British Sikh community has grown from fewer than 2,000 to over 700,000. Sikhs are a role model community and provide an exceptionally interesting example of successful integration whilst maintaining a very visible and distinctive religious identity.

Evidently, Sikhs have historically made a huge contribution to British Society and remain loyal to Britain. Recent surveys have shown that 95% of Sikhs in Britain are proud to be identified as British. Sikhs have proved to be an integral part of British multicultural society and make an immense contribution in all spheres of public life in the UK through honest hard work, promoting equality and tolerance towards others, charitable work and interfaith dialogue.

There is much discussion at present on the impact of immigration and the integration of minority communities within British society to promote harmonious relationships so that everyone can live and work successfully alongside each other. British Sikhs have openly practised their religion by welcoming people of all faiths to participate in their Gurdwaras, events and celebrations. Sikhs are a positive example of the current debate around super-diversity and multiculturalism in Britain.

This journey has not been without its challenges and struggles. When it became absolutely necessary, Sikhs have not been reluctant to assert their right to defend religious sensibilities through peaceful protests, lobbying and legal action. This was clearly demonstrated twelve months ago by the revelations relating to British involvement with the events of 1984 in Amritsar, Punjab. The deliberate stigmatisation of the visible British Sikh minority continues to be an issue for Sikhs who have continually been unfairly targeted by the Indian Government.

Sikhs have successfully campaigned to secure amendments in legislation to allow them to wear the Sikh turban, for example:

- Motor-Cycles Crash Helmets (Religious Exemption) Act 1976: exempts a Sikh who wears a turban from having to wear a crash helmet on a motorcycle.
- Employment Act 1989: exempts a turban-wearing Sikh from any requirement to wear a safety helmet on a construction site.

On a number of occasions, British Sikhs have had to take legal action to tackle discrimination against the wearing of their turbans. The historic *Mandla vs Dowell Lee* case in the House of Lords in 1983 led to the legal recognition of Sikhs as an ethnic group. More recently a case in the High Court in 2008 ruled in favour of a fourteen year old Sikh school girl in South Wales to wear her Kara (a steel or iron bracelet that constantly reminds a Sikh of the all pervading nature of the Divine and the importance of righteous actions).

Today, although Sikhs have excelled in commerce, education and medicine, they have yet to fully interact, participate and engage with the democratic institutions through the UK political system with similar dedication. They have not been truly represented in relation to their population or contribution.

Sikhs must be allowed to become part of the DNA of the British nation and become directly involved in the decision making processes that impact on their daily lives. Sikhs will only have integrated successfully when they have fully interacted and participated both with and within civic society through local, regional and national democratic institutions and organisations.

The current political representation of British Sikhs is somewhat of a paradox given the "Miri-Piri" principle in Sikhi. This key Sikh concept accentuates the close relationship between the temporal and the spiritual components of life that influence a Sikh's religious and political thought and governs their social structure, political behaviour, organisation, leadership and politics. Sikh organisations, such as the Sikh Federation (UK), and the umbrella forum, the Sikh Council UK in more recent times, have tried to address this issue through increased social and political activism amongst British Sikhs. As a result, presentation and awareness of Sikh issues has considerably improved and the British Sikh community are acknowledging the need to lobby Parliamentarians and to participate through political parties at local and national levels.

Britain is one of the most tolerant multicultural countries in the world in which everyone can enjoy the glow of true democracy, as well as the freedom to practise one's own religion. Ongoing dialogue between representatives of minority religious communities and the British establishment, including the Parliamentarians and the Government, is important to ensure harmony in a plural society. In the Sikh case, due to lack of elected or selected Sikh representatives, it is our duty to provide as much information as possible about the community's concerns to ensure continuity of religious and human rights freedoms.

In May 2001, the then Prime Minister, Tony Blair, said in his Khalsa Vaisakhi speech in Birmingham:

*"Today we celebrate the creation of a nation who's Gurdwaras open up to all - rich and poor, male and female, old and young. We celebrate a religion that respects all other religions. And a people who seek to lead a life of compassion, humility, piety and justice."*

## Role of the Sikh Federation (UK), Sikh Council UK and the Sikh Network

Recognising the needs of a growing British Sikh community, the Sikh Federation (UK) was launched in September 2003 as the first and only Sikh political party to represent Sikh issues and concerns and also to facilitate consultations by the Government and main political parties on issues of national interest.

It is now widely accepted by the UK Government, political parties, UK politicians and European institutions that the Sikh Federation (UK) represents a model political organisation for minority communities wishing to participate in the democratic processes and the life of the nation. British politicians from across the political spectrum and media recognise and respect the grassroots level network which the Sikh Federation (UK) provides for effective British Sikh political engagement. This is evidenced not only by the headlines made by Sikh issues through the work of the Federation, but also by the progress in genuine dialogue between the Federation representing Sikh interests at grassroots level, and the Government and senior politicians of the main parties.

The Sikh Council UK was established in December 2010 as a common platform for membership Gurdwaras and Sikh organisations to meet and discuss issues of common concern. The Sikh Council UK has been active in relation to a number of issues and points that have also been highlighted in the Sikh Manifesto. For example, they contributed to the consultations around the legislation on caste discrimination and have been instrumental in extending the exemption for turban-wearing Sikhs from any requirement to wear safety helmets beyond construction sites. However, there is a danger that the De-Regulation Bill, if enacted as it stands, will introduce into legislation for the first time the possibility of discrimination against turban wearing Sikhs in the armed forces, police forces and fire services.

As an important next step, an inclusive Sikh Network has been set up through collaboration with Sikh organisations, Gurdwaras, youth groups, professionals and individual activists. The Sikh Network comprises over 1,000 members and includes Sikh activists from,

existing Sikh organisations, human rights and political activists, lawyers, academics, researchers, journalists, public sector professionals, management consultants, marketing and PR professionals, charity workers and students. All members of the Sikh Network are invited with the opportunity to fully participate and contribute, even those who wish to remain in the background.

## Significance of the Sikh Manifesto 2015-2020

In the last decade the approach of the community led by the Sikh Federation (UK) has been politically transformed from radical immigrant class politics to a leader of the Sikh Diaspora in professional lobbying on a comprehensive range of issues. The Sikh Manifesto 2015-2020 is widely viewed as a crucial development reflecting the political maturity of British Sikhs.

At the National Sikh Convention in September 2014 it was decided to establish the Sikh Network and launch a Sikh Manifesto for the 2015 General Election so that the main political parties seeking Sikh votes are made aware of the Sikh objectives during the next Parliament.

Members of the Sikh Network have worked with the Sikh Federation (UK) to produce the Sikh Manifesto which provides politicians and the wider public with a better understanding of the Sikh contribution, as well as the challenges which Sikhs continue to face due mainly to their distinct religious needs and identity. The Sikh Manifesto is about empowering the UK Sikh community to engage with the UK political system and create partnerships with democratic institutions. The Sikh Network will monitor progress against the Sikh Manifesto over the next five years and discuss and agree changes in strategy and approach to help deliver against the issues set out.

The ten-point Sikh Manifesto is unlike the manifestos of the political parties. All Sikh organisations can relate to all or part of the Sikh Manifesto as a briefing document. It is based on the widest possible consensus and collates the most important areas in which challenges remain for British Sikhs and progress is required. **All Sikhs can relate to and adopt most or all objectives set out in the Sikh Manifesto and will use it to challenge candidates and political parties to clarify their position prior to the May 2015 General Election and also judge their backing for Sikh issues after being elected.**

This Sikh Manifesto is based on nationwide consultations through meetings and networks and is written with the May 2015 General Election in mind. Some issues can also be raised with members of the assemblies and parliaments of London, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales and with members of the House of Lords and the European Parliament.



The Sikh Manifesto has been welcomed and endorsed by leading members of the Sikh community as well as all the major political party leaders. With the Sikh Manifesto we will test the commitment of the main political parties and individual politicians to the British Sikh community, and the Sikh Federation (UK) through the Sikh Network may advise Sikhs to vote for certain parties or MPs if they have a good track record in looking after the interests of the Sikhs, or if they are committed to work with Sikhs on points raised in the Sikh Manifesto. Hopefully, it should also promote openness and accountability on the part of those Parliamentary candidates who are seeking Sikh votes to get elected.

The Electoral Commission has highlighted that Sikhs participate in the British voting process more than most other communities. However, to make the Sikh vote count we should strongly bear in mind the prior commitment of the party or the candidate to the issues and concerns raised by the Sikh community through the Sikh Manifesto.

#### **Building on the close Anglo-Sikh relationship developed over 200 years**

The genesis of the British Sikh community can be traced back to the complex Anglo-Sikh relationship that developed over 200 years ago at the start of the nineteenth century. This relationship was formalised when friendship treaties were signed in 1805 and 1809 CE with Maharaja Ranjit Singh the ruler of the formidable Sikh empire who ruled from 1801 to 1839 CE.

Following the Maharaja's death and a period of instability in Punjab, there were two Anglo-Sikh Wars in 1846 and 1849. Some famous battles were fought during these wars between the Khalsa army and the combined British and Indian forces. Following these wars the Sikh kingdom was annexed in 1849.

Whilst the legality of the 'annexation' by Lord Dalhousie remains in doubt to this day, the Sikhs won the respect of the British military commanders, politicians and scholars alike. In 1849, J D Cunningham, a commander in the British army and a historian, wrote 'History of the Sikhs' as a result of his admiration for the theo-political Sikh nation founded on the egalitarian universal ideology of Guru Nanak. However, his candour about the British duplicity cost Cunningham his promising career. Nevertheless, according to the publishers of his book 'no serious student of Indian history can do without' reading this classic record of a great people.

The British rulers of India studied the Sikh religious history and their proud military tradition. They realised that the Sikhs would make loyal allies. Sikh regiments were raised during the colonial period in the second half

of the nineteenth century. Sikhs played a key role during the disorganised 1857 Indian mutiny. India was saved from return to the pre-colonial chaos and power struggles. The sub-continent was still evolving towards some sort of a semblance of nationhood – a concept alien to hundreds of Indian princes and feudal lords at the time. Anglo-Sikh bonds were further strengthened by North-West frontier battles like the epic battle of Saragarhi.

Later thousands answered the call of Britain and the Allies in both world wars with over 83,000 turban-wearing Sikhs sacrificing their lives, with over 109,000 wounded, all for the freedom of Europe and the western world. Sikhs, who made up less than 2% of the Indian population accounted for at least 20% of the Indian volunteer army, the largest ever in action.

#### **The success of immigration of Sikhs to Britain**

The first recorded Sikh settler in Britain was Maharajah Duleep Singh the last ruler of the Sikh kingdom, and the son of Maharajah Ranjit Singh. He was dethroned after six years' rule, and exiled to Britain in 1849 at the age of 14, after the Anglo-Sikh wars. Despite the early arrival of the Maharajah, the first Sikh Gurdwara was not established until 1911 in London. Gurdwaras are the main institutions for Sikhs and central to community-building.

The first Sikh migration came from the Punjab in the 1950s and 1960s or from East Africa slightly later. It was mostly of men from the Punjab seeking work in British industry, which had a shortage of unskilled labour. Most of the new arrivals worked in foundry and textile industries. These new arrivals mostly settled in London, Birmingham and West Yorkshire. The first batch of Sikh migrants usually removed the outward religious symbols (turban, hair and beard) as racist prejudice in Britain was a major obstacle in securing employment.

Sikhs left Punjab not just because there was a shortage of industrial and agricultural jobs, but also because of the chaotic aftermath of the 1947 division of 'British' India into the secular but largely Hindu state of India and the Muslim state of Pakistan. The frontier between India and Pakistan divided the Sikh homeland of the Punjab.

There was bloodshed and destruction as millions tried to cross the border to the safety of their own communities. The Punjab changed from a settled and prosperous area to a violent and overcrowded frontier zone. Many Sikhs migrated from what was to become West Punjab (Pakistan) to East Punjab (India) whilst others left India altogether. East Punjab was disrupted again in 1966, when India further subdivided it into three parts, with the creation of the states of Punjab, Haryana, and Himachal Pradesh.

The migration from East Africa was the result of the move to Africanise countries like Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya, depriving many Asians of their work, and in many cases expelling them altogether. The Sikhs from East Africa took a robust attitude to the outward symbols of Sikhism and continued to wear them.

Since they had been living as an expatriate community in Africa for over 70 years they were accustomed to being a highly visible minority. They also had the further advantage of usually being highly skilled and employable, in contrast to those from Punjab.

The presence of a group of Sikhs who radiated pride in being members of the Khalsa encouraged others to externally display their Sikh identity through the five Kakkars (often referred to as the 5K's). These are the external markers of the Khalsa Sikh Identity which continue to strengthen the visibility of the British Sikh community. In the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s British Sikhs campaigned tenaciously to safeguard their religious identity thereby leading the way in terms of British multiculturalism.



#### **50 target seats and more...**

The opinion polls and the emergence of UKIP make the Sikh vote crucial to all the main political parties in the May 2015 General Election. Based on the results of the 2010 General Election there are sufficient Sikh voters alone to determine who will be elected in around 80% of the 50 target seats.

High voter registration, one of the highest turnouts and the ability to influence non-Sikh voters in large numbers through a focused campaign combine to make the Sikh Manifesto, the 50 target seats and voting strategy a powerful vehicle to secure positive change for the British Sikh community.

For the purposes of the Sikh Manifesto we have drawn a line at 50 target seats. There are however other marginal seats, such as, Nuneaton and Manchester, Withington where the local Sikh vote although relatively small will matter. In addition, there are also numerous safe seats, such as Birmingham, Selly Oak, Ealing Central & Acton, Huddersfield, Leicester South, Ealing North, Birmingham, Ladywood, East Ham and Barking that each have thousands of Sikh voters who can not be ignored.



## SECTION 1 - MORE EFFECTIVE REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENT

**More effective representation in Parliament of issues of importance to the Sikh community, including an increase in Sikh representation in the House of Commons and Lords**

### Key priorities:

- Regardless of their own ethnicity, MPs that are elected in May 2015 and represent a large number of Sikh constituents should ensure all issues of importance to the British Sikh community are appropriately and adequately raised and acted upon both in Parliament and by the next government.
- Over the next five years, the British Sikh community working with the political parties should encourage more Sikh men and women, especially visible Sikhs to enter politics and remove the barriers that exist to prevent them from entering the House of Commons.
- Acting collectively, after the General Election the three main political parties and the Prime Minister would ensure a number of Sikhs are appointed to the House of Lords at the earliest opportunity. Ideally those appointed will be visible, very well known within the Sikh community and will possess the skills, professional background and attributes to be able to make a positive contribution in the House of Lords. These role models would send a very positive signal to members of the Sikh community across the UK.

### Background

**Effective representation of Sikhs and Sikh issues in Parliament** - Political parties and government should have transparent policies to ensure Parliament represents the people it serves and there is equality of opportunity. Britain's diverse multi-cultural society, including the Sikh community should be reflected in the make-up of its Parliament. This is vital for good governance of the nation as it will promote social cohesion and equal political rights of all its citizens.

With the publication of the Sikh Manifesto, the days of relying on a small number of stalwart MPs to represent the Sikh community must be viewed as something from the past. The Sikh community expects much more from the 100+ MPs elected in May 2015 who represent a large number of Sikh constituents. In particular, this applies to the 30 or so MPs with at least 5,000 Sikh constituents and another 70 or so MPs with over a thousand Sikh constituents. The political parties the MPs belong to

should also ensure the full range of issues of importance to the Sikh community set out in this manifesto are appropriately raised and acted upon in Parliament and by the next government.

**Likelihood of no Sikh MPs in the 2015-2020 Parliament** - As far as the Sikh community is concerned there is a possibility that following the General Election in May 2015 there may be no Sikh MPs, although the demographics suggest there should be around half a dozen. All the main political parties need to do much more in the next five years to attract and select Sikh candidates to come forward and become MPs from seats from which they have a reasonable chance of getting elected.

**In the last 10 years there have only been a total of five Sikh MPs (three Labour, one Conservative and one Liberal Democrat), none have been visible identity Sikhs (i.e. turban-wearing) or women suggesting a possible bias in the selection process.** Labour has selected two turban wearing Sikh candidates for May 2015, but both are in seats where they will struggle to win. The Conservatives have selected one turban wearing Sikh candidate for May 2015, but again in a relatively safe Labour seat and another is on the Conservatives approved list, but has not yet been selected in a seat. The situation for effective Sikh representation in the House of Commons needs urgent improvement.

By contrast, other minority communities appear to be far better integrated and accepted in the system and we celebrate their success. For example, there are currently 24 MPs of Jewish decent and many in senior positions despite the Jewish population being half that of the British Sikh community. Following the General Election there are expected to be 6 Hindu MPs and 11 Muslim MPs split almost evenly between Labour and the Conservatives.

**Political parties need to encourage more Sikhs to enter politics and become councillors** - In the last decade the number of Sikh councillors has slowly increased by around 15% to over 100, but this is still one-third the number of councillors in proportion to the British Sikh population. Compared to 10 years ago more Sikh women are councillors (around 20%) and there are many younger Sikhs who have become councillors. This bodes well for making a break through into the Commons in the medium to longer term. Over 90% of Sikh councillors belong to the Labour Party, the remainder are mainly Conservative. In the next five years it is realistic to expect an increase in the number of Sikh councillors to around 150.

**More Sikhs, especially visible Sikh men and Sikh women, should be encouraged to enter politics and barriers preventing them from getting elected as representatives, removed** - The Sikh community also shares the responsibility for the lack of Sikh identity MPs and insufficient number of councillors. The Sikh community needs to work with the political parties to address why so few Sikhs are willing to enter politics and to remove the barriers that exist, which appear to be far greater for turban-wearing Sikh men and Sikh women. To get a grip on the size of the challenge that confronts British Sikhs, we need to objectively assess just how far we have come and how far we have to go on this important issue. The rate of progress in selecting and electing Sikhs has been painfully slow.

Therefore, it is important that political parties work with their Sikh members, with members who are not Sikhs, and with Sikhs who are not (yet) members, to encourage and train and listen to Sikh voices. This is a process which should start immediately. If the root causes and inbuilt bias in the selection/election process are addressed, we should expect a more level playing field for Sikh candidates by 2020. The measure of success would be several Sikh MPs and at least 50 more local councillors by 2020.

**Having duly consulted the Opposition parties, the Prime Minister after the General Election should ensure a number of Sikhs are appointed to the House of Lords at the earliest opportunity** - Representation in the House of Lords is more in the hands of the political parties and their leaders as nearly all are now party political appointees. Sikhs are hugely under-represented in the Lords while other minorities are clearly over-represented. Currently there are three Sikhs in the House of Lords, two Conservative and a cross-bencher. Again the demographics suggest there should be at least eight Sikhs in the House of Lords, although, given the lack of Sikh representation in the Commons the party leaders could choose to have more Sikhs in the Lords. In comparison there are 23 Jewish, 20 Hindu and 13 Muslim peers. These are split almost evenly across the three main political parties.

Overall the Conservatives have one Sikh MP and two Sikhs in the House of Lords, while both Labour and the Liberal Democrats have no Sikh representation in either Houses of Parliament. Labour, as one of the two larger parties that has traditionally attracted the Sikh vote, is particularly vulnerable to criticism for a lack of Sikh representation in Parliament, especially in the House of Lords where their one Sikh Lord passed away in January 2013 and has not been replaced.



**There is only one MP & three Lords representing over 700,000 UK Sikhs**



## SECTION 2 - SEPARATE ETHNIC MONITORING OF SIKHS

**Changing the Office for National Statistics (ONS) guidance to public bodies on collecting, monitoring and using ethnic group data by requiring Sikhs to be monitored as a distinct ethnic group and agreeing to a separate ethnic tick box for Sikhs in the 2021 Census**

### Key priorities:

- The UK Government and the ONS to change the official ethnicity classification guidance for those who collect and present ethnic group data e.g. public bodies, to ensure they use their administrative resources to monitor Sikhs as a distinct ethnic group for service planning and determining contribution to society.

- The UK Government, MPs from the main political parties and the ONS to recognise Sikhs as an ethnic group by agreeing to place a separate 'Sikh' ethnic tick box in the 2021 Census for the compulsory ethnicity question.

### Background

**Public bodies to monitor Sikhs as a distinct ethnic group** - As a nation, our Government and its departments are not fully aware of the extent of barriers that Sikhs face as a distinct religio-ethnic community. British Sikhs face obstacles, for example, in securing employment, progression into senior jobs, accessing healthcare according to specific needs or indeed in analysing the full Sikh contribution as a community to economic growth in different sectors. This is where Sikh monitoring could have a demonstrable impact on the day to day lives of British Sikhs.

In 1983 the Mandla vs Lee case saw the House of Lords use a set of criteria from the Race Relations Act (1976) (since subsumed into the Equality Act 2010) to define Sikhs as a distinct ethnic group. The criteria used stated that to be a distinct ethnic group, the said group needs to have a long shared history which the group consciously keeps as distinct from other groups and has own culture and traditions. Supplementary criteria concerning language, geographical origins, literature, and history of persecution were also used to come to the finding that Sikhs are a distinct ethnic group. Yet, despite this, the law of the UK is not being implemented in respect of the Census and other official statistics.

Public bodies monitor ethnicity across all services whereas religious statistics are rarely used for this purpose. Separate Sikh ethnic monitoring should be the basis for UK's statistical expertise, the ONS analysis, and for Government policy, for allocation of resources and community development programmes through the central government departments and agencies and locally delivered services.

ONS Ethnic Group Classification Guidance is regularly reviewed and applied by public bodies. After the 2021 Census, administrative data sources from public bodies will replace the Census as the key method of collating information of national use. **It is imperative that the classification guidance to public bodies states that Sikhs should be measured as an ethnic group in order to deliver better informed services.**

One example of what this means in practice is that without monitoring Sikhs as a distinct group, for example, how would the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) know that 31% of Sikh children feel unfairly discriminated against. The reality is UNCRC would be able to do very little to examine discrimination against Sikh children or put in place effective plans and measures to reduce this without separate monitoring. More importantly, what could be the possibilities and the potential impact on the lives of Sikh children if this information was readily available and fed into the policy decisions by the Department for Education?

Similarly a study by Cancer Research UK demonstrated reduced risk of breast cancer in Punjabi Hindu women and an increased risk for Sikh women and the British Medical Journal (BMJ) in 2009 found that alcoholism exceptionally high amongst 'Irish', 'Scottish' and 'Indian' men, when further examined the majority of those at risk in the 'Indian' category were Sikh men. Yet, policy through to service delivery in this issue has been criticised for perpetuating a myth that alcohol related harm is low in all UK South Asians. The BMJ highlights that Sikh men have a mortality rate which is four times higher than British white men for alcoholic liver disease. How many lives could be saved or diseases prevented if we monitor people to give them timely access to the services they need? The Department of Health has stated that ethnicity indicators significantly explain the needs in the various models used for resource allocation.

### Separate ethnic tick box for Sikhs in the 2021 Census

- The Census results are used as the key barometer for public service planning and allocation of resources. Therefore Sikhs, as other ethnic groups, need to be counted in order to receive relevant and fair services. The 2021 Census will be the last Census and therefore our only opportunity to robustly count the number of Sikhs in England and Wales (and Scotland where there will be a separate Census).

It is often cited that 'what gets counted gets done' when we consider why we need a Census or national monitoring processes. Policy-makers currently refer to the Census data as a default position to understand the make-up of the nation. Inaccuracies and omissions in the Census impact more than just getting the figures right for recording purposes, although this in itself is important. The ethnicity question in the Census is a compulsory one unlike the religion question. This leads to widely reported disparities with most publications stating the actual number of Sikhs is circa 700,000 whereas some limit the number of Sikhs by simply quoting the much lower 2011 Census figure using the religious question response only. Inaccurate information means that the real needs and contributions of individuals and communities are hidden which is to the detriment of those very people who have given so much to the UK. The 2021 Census will be the last Census, it is imperative that it includes Sikhs as an ethnic tick box and thereafter essential that classification guidance from the Office for National Statistics recommends public bodies monitor Sikhs as an ethnic group, per legislation and community demand.

In the past some have commented that the 'Indian' tick box would suffice. However time and time again this has been shown to be a poor proxy measure that amalgamates distinct needs with a wider group. Much as would be the case by combining White British with White European. Respondents to a survey targeting British Sikhs, when asked how they identify themselves 4% selected 'Indian', 1% selected 'Asian' whilst 67% selected 'Sikh'. This clearly suggests that when given the choice 'Sikh' is the most commonly selected ethnic characteristic chosen by Sikhs. Whereas the 'Indian' and 'Asian' options were those Sikhs least identified themselves with.

Demand for separate Sikh monitoring from the Sikh community has grown significantly, in part this demand was mobilised in 2010 in the run-up to the 2011 Census through a media campaign by the Sikh Federation (UK) supported by an in-depth report

highlighting the strength of need, lack of alternative sources and usability of a separate Sikh tick box. Sikhs were galvanised by the campaign with many reporting that they felt better informed as to the importance of separate monitoring and wanting to choose an option that best represented their actual ethnic group.

This saw an increase in Sikhs selecting the 'Any Other Ethnic Group' box and writing in 'Sikh'. In the 2001 Census, just over 10,000 Sikhs protested and wrote Sikh as their ethnic group, but in the 2011 Census this increased by 400%. The momentum generated and the awareness of Sikhs has significantly increased. We now know through our own surveys that when we give Sikhs the option (i.e. a tick box) over two-thirds will tick Sikh and in the 2011 Census over 40,000 Sikhs protested by not using one of the existing ethnic group categories, but chose to write in "Sikh", a four-fold increase on the previous Census.

The 2021 Census will be the last Census. We understand it will be used for validation purposes for future administrative sources and therefore it is essential that this final Census sets precedence for future monitoring.

**Sikhs are part and parcel of British society and contribute positively...time to record and count us appropriately**



## SECTION 3 - STATUTORY CODE OF PRACTICE ON THE 5K's AND SIKH TURBAN

**Introduction of a statutory Code of Practice on the 5K's and Sikh turban to prevent discrimination in the workplace and public spaces**

### Key priorities:

- Introduction of a statutory Code of Practice explaining the duty of employers and other bodies to avoid discrimination against Sikhs at work and public spaces because of any of the 5K's or the Sikh turban
- Produce and issue guidelines on the protocol when visiting Gurdwaras, participating in Guru Ka Langar and understanding and respecting Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji

### Background

**Sikhs are protected from racial as well as religious discrimination** - Sikhs are both an ethnic and a religious group. So they are protected from racial as well as religious discrimination. This principle was decided by the House of Lords (the *Mandla v Dowell-Lee* case [1983] 2 AC 548).

There are a number of different pieces of legislation that protect Sikhs from discrimination, these include general equalities and anti-discrimination legislation, i.e. Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998 and some specific legislation that provides for the wearing of the 5K's, i.e. Offensive weapons Act 1998 (provides a defence for a Sikh Kirpan), Motor-Cycles Crash Helmets (Religious Exemption) Act 1976, Section 3(2) of the Horses (Protective Headgear for Young Riders) Regulations 1992 (Both exempt a Sikh who wears a turban from having to wear a crash helmet on a motorcycle or Horse).

The lack of understanding of the above pieces of legislation and the rights of Sikhs to practice their religion has inadvertently led to tensions between the rights of individuals and the rights of organisations and institutions. A number of organisations working with the Sikh community have case studies, to demonstrate where Sikhs have been discriminated against. There have been a number of cases, such as the case of *Watkins-Singh v Aberdare Girls' High School*, where the courts recognised a Sikh's right to wear a Kara at school.

After 9/11 Sikhs in the UK had increased difficulties, especially regarding the wearing of the Kirpan with a much greater focus on security. These difficulties arose in the workplace and even public spaces, such as supermarkets and shopping centres. A number of buildings operated by government and the private sector also introduced restrictions. Sikhs also experienced discrimination as regards wearing the Kara in schools and the workplace.

**Need for a Statutory Code of Practice** - The need for a Statutory Code of Practice was first raised in Parliament almost a decade earlier and some five years later the Equalities and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) produced non-statutory 'Guidance on the wearing of Sikh Articles of Faith in the workplace and public spaces'. This was a helpful step forward in official recognition of the Sikh religious identity in the UK. Whilst the guidance has provided clarity and promoted greater understanding it has not prevented Sikhs from repeatedly experiencing discrimination.

**What is required is comprehensive statutory guidance that covers all the existing pieces of legislation that allow Sikhs to practice their faith both in the workplace and public spaces. This can be achieved by developing a Statutory Code of Practice.** This would be an authoritative, comprehensive and technical guide to the relevant law. It would be invaluable to lawyers, advocates, human resources personnel, courts and tribunals, everyone who needs to understand the law in depth, or to apply it in practice.

The Statutory Code of Practice will raise awareness of the rights of Sikhs to practise and follow their faith. It will also provide useful information for balancing the needs of individuals and service users with those of employers and public services within the UK legal framework. Although a Statutory Code of Practice would be an authoritative statement of the law, the courts would not be bound by it, but would need to take it into account.

**The 5K's and the turban** - All initiated Sikhs (also referred to as Amritdhari Sikhs) are required to wear their articles of faith, the turban and the 5K's (PanjKakaar), at all times. These are articles of faith and Amritdhari Sikhs believe that they cannot be replaced by symbolic replicas.

The 5K's are the:

- **Kangha:** a small wooden comb worn in the hair at all times, inside the turban. It represents the aspiration for spiritual discipline and purity.

- **Kirpan:** a curved iron or steel blade worn over or underneath the individual's clothing. Symbolically it represents the power of truth, and is a reminder of the obligation to prevent violence rather than to stand by. The Kirpan is associated with the concepts of 'kirpa' (blessings and benevolence) and 'aan' (meaning honour and dignity).

- **Kara:** an iron or steel bracelet, worn on the wrist. It reminds Sikhs of the all-pervading and eternal Divine Being and acts as a constant reminder to individuals to restrain themselves from immoral or unrighteous acts.

- **Kachera** (or kachh or kaccha): special cotton undershorts representing fidelity and morality.

- **Kesh:** uncut hair, which is regarded as a gift from God.

The Sikh turban (also known as a *dastaar*) is a long loose piece of cloth wrapped and tied around the head to cover the hair. While it is not one of the 5K's, wearing a turban is mandatory for an Amritdhari Sikh as well as Sikhs who keep their Kesh. The turban has indeed become the hallmark of the Khalsa Sikh identity. It is more common for men to wear a turban, but it is also increasingly worn by women, although many others cover their hair with a *chuni* (long scarf) or wear a small scarf called a *keski*. Before young boys are able to tie a turban themselves, their hair is kept in a topknot and may be covered with a scarf called a *patka*. It is important to note that as well as having religious significance, the Kara, Kesh and Sikh turban are of exceptional importance to the cultural and ethnic identity of Sikhs, and may also be worn by non-initiated Sikhs

**Guidelines on the protocol to observe when visiting Gurdwaras** - Many non-Sikhs visit the Gurdwara and participate in Guru Ka Langar (free food kitchen). It is estimated around 5,000 free meals are served to non-Sikhs each week or more than a quarter of a million each year. There are also times when representatives of various public bodies may need to visit a Gurdwara and need to be aware of the various protocols that must be observed.

Official non-statutory guidelines developed between the UK Government and the Sikh community would be helpful to raise awareness and avoid any difficulties. The guidelines could cover etiquette to be observed when visiting the Gurdwara, and would include the following points:

- those unable to enter a Gurdwara as they are under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or are in procession of cigarettes or tobacco
- what you need to do when entering the Gurdwara
- how to respect Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji (the Sikh holy scriptures)
- participating in Guru Ka Langar
- modest dress code



**Prevent discrimination against Sikhs at work and in public spaces because of their distinct identity**



## SECTION 4 - ACTION AGAINST PERPETRATORS OF GROOMING AND FORCED CONVERSIONS

**Determined UK Government action against perpetrators of grooming and forced conversions and abandonment of the term 'Asian' by public bodies and the media**

### Key priorities:

- National, regional and local bodies set up to protect children and vulnerable adults against grooming and forced conversions take co-ordinated action against perpetrators working with Sikh community organisations supporting victims and their families.
- The UK Government should issue guidance to have accurate reporting systems and protocols across the country that identifies the ethnicities of victims and perpetrators of grooming and forced conversions to develop and deliver culturally sensitive strategies.
- The UK Government should provide funding to Sikh community organisations specialising in tackling Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and forced conversions and facilitate collaborative working with specialist service providers. This would include funding for cultural awareness training in relation to the Sikh community for front line professionals such as police, social service, teachers and medical professionals.
- The government should encourage public bodies and the media to abandon the use of the term 'Asian' for reasons of political correctness.

### Background

Grooming is a term that is applied to where a predator builds an emotional connection with children to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse or exploitation. Children and young people can be groomed online or in the real world, by a stranger or by someone they know. Many children and young people do not always understand that they have been groomed; they fail to recognise it as sexual abuse. Recent media and public attention has mainly focused on White British female victims of sexual exploitation and Muslim offenders.

CSE of young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where the young person (or third person/s) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or

others performing on them, sexual activities. CSE can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition, for example being persuaded to post images on the internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. Grooming is often linked to forced conversions.

**British Sikh girls are at risk of grooming and forced conversions** - 15 months ago a BBC Inside Out investigation uncovered that British Sikh girls are being preyed upon by men who subject them to sexual abuse. In many cases the men deceive the girls into believing that they are Sikh to gain their trust. Desperate to hide their secret for fear of bringing shame to their families, girls are often forced to leave home. Inside Out discovered that groomers are actually exploiting the fact that Sikh families are less likely to report incidents of abuse. The threat of shame and dis-honour appears to be a key instrument of control for victims of Sikh background. There are concerns that the needs of Sikh victims of sexual exploitation are neglected during the development, delivery of appropriate intervention and prevention measures because of their reluctance to disclose abuse.

**Child sexual grooming of Sikh girls is under-reported** - It is difficult to ascertain the scale of grooming and sexual exploitation due to the reluctance of victims to disclose and report. They have specific vulnerabilities relating to their culture which are exploited and also constitute a barrier to disclosure and reporting. The Sikh Awareness Society (SAS), a charity which focuses on family welfare, claims it has investigated more than 200 reports of child sexual grooming in the UK over the past five years, many involving Muslim men. However, there are no official statistics to support this claim, because incidents of sexual abuse featuring Sikh minors are rarely reported to the authorities.

When it comes to faith-based communities sexual abuse is woefully under-reported. It is going on but it is difficult to launch investigations when the victims and their families refuse to talk. The reason Sikhs rarely reveal incidents of abuse to the authorities has to do with family honour. As part of this code of honour, virginity before marriage is held sacred by Sikhs. So when cases of abuse occur the majority of parents just want to stay quiet as if nothing has happened because they know that a girl who is tarnished with this kind of thing may never get married.

Parents may be doing these things out of the best intentions but the problem is that by telling the child to keep quiet, the children will not get a chance to recover from the ordeal. Removing them from the home, from their original support network, gives a very strong message that they are the problem and that can lead to enormous long-standing emotional and psychological issues.

The Sikh community seeks further support in addressing cultural issues that allow the abuse to occur. Efforts need to be made at all levels to overcome these barriers to encourage reporting. Police and local safeguarding authorities should work in partnership with Sikh organisations, e.g. religious institutions, women's groups, youth groups to raise awareness of sexual exploitation and prevention/protection strategies. The learning gained from such partnerships should be shared with parents and community organisations to build resilience to abuse and encourage confidence in reporting.

**Cases are poorly investigated by the police** - When some Sikh parents are brave enough to risk family honour and do report incidents of sexual grooming to the police, there are concerns that their cases are poorly investigated. Recent revelations suggest political correctness and pressure from local politicians belonging to the same community as the perpetrators prevents police from undertaking proper investigations.

**Accurate reporting systems and protocols that identify the ethnicities of victims and perpetrators** - A consistent protocol for accurate reporting is required nationally. Reporting systems which accurately identify ethnicities of victims and perpetrators are required. This will enable factual reporting of the prevalence of CSE and forced conversions within different communities based on ethnicity. This will enable greater awareness and development and delivery of culturally sensitive strategies.

**Funding to Sikh community organisations specialising in tackling CSE and forced conversions** - Voluntary, community and faith groups play an important role within the community by providing services and support to children and their families. They have a duty to ensure that they are able to keep children safe and that the governance structures are in place in their organisations to ensure this.

NGO's tackling CSE and forced conversions at a community level need to be financially supported by central and local government as they are most likely to be a trusted point of contact for victims. Government needs to facilitate collaborative working between specialist Sikh organisations specialist service providers so resources can be shared and awareness training rolled out throughout the UK.

There is a general feeling that the larger, well known charities are often well funded or preferred by Government, however, the smaller, grassroots charities that are equally making a difference and have the relationships to quickly influence change are overlooked. Government funding to specialist service providers could therefore require partnership working with Sikh charities to develop capacity resulting in more support for victims and those at risk.

Cultural awareness training specifically looking at the Sikh community is currently missing from front line professionals such as police, social service, teachers and medical professionals. There is significant evidence that failure to act by professionals is a fear of being labelled racist or a lack of understanding between religion and culture. Giving professionals the confidence through cultural awareness will help bridge the gap of ignorance.

**Abandoning the throwaway term 'Asian'** - It has become apparent in recent media reports that the term 'Asian' is being used to cloud specific issues with Pakistani and other communities. Hindu and Sikh organisations have been vocal in demanding a better more accurate way of reporting. This throwaway term is being used to distort information that relate to the different groups. The impact of this is that vague reporting often done so as not to offend certain groups, creates an inaccurate and misleading public perception of Sikhs, it also clouds responsibility so that groups who can and should be working within their community to tackle issues are not being mobilised.

There is evidence of a disproportionately high number of people from the Pakistani Muslim community that have been found guilty of committing crimes e.g. child grooming or honour killings.



**Grooming & forced conversions have been affecting the Sikh community for years, we need to address this now**



## SECTION 5 - NETWORK OF STATE FUNDED SIKH ETHOS SCHOOLS

### Central and local government support for a network of state funded Sikh ethos schools

#### Key priorities:

- The Sikh community has a target to try and establish a network of around 25 state funded Sikh schools by 2020. It will look to the UK Government, MPs and those running local government irrespective of political party to help achieve this target.

#### Background

Faith schools make a significant contribution to the educational system. Many are the best performing schools in the country. Parents of all faiths value these schools for the quality of education and for their strong ethos.

The UK's first Sikh school was established as an independent school in 1993 in Hayes and joined the state-maintained sector in 1999. There are currently around 7,000 state faith schools or one-third of all schools. Almost 99% of faith schools are Christian and there are currently only eight Sikh schools with a further four approved and due to open and applications pending for five others. There are over five times as many Jewish schools despite the Jewish population being lower than the Sikh population.

The number of Sikh schools would have been even smaller had the community not benefited from the free schools initiative that accounts for the majority of Sikh schools. The Sikh community being a minority community has faced a number of prejudices and other challenges to establish Sikh ethos schools.

The UK Government, MPs and those running local government must appreciate these challenges and work together in the next five years to deliver around 25 Sikh ethos schools. Assuming Sikhs account for around one per cent of the population then there should be around 70 Sikh ethos schools.

Sikh ethos schools support the nurturing of pupils personally, socially and academically to achieve their potential through promoting high standards of behaviour, underpinned by a strong pastoral system.

Education has been the foundation of the Sikh faith, as the literal translation of the word 'Sikh' is a learner for life. The Sikh Gurus expressed that the spiritual and secular life should coexist. For Sikhs, education not only prepares students for work and life in society but also supports spiritual growth. Education is understood by Sikhs to raise aspirations and personal standards, encourage self-awareness and humility, and inspire all to seek a greater purpose in life.

**Sikh ethos schools are based on the core teachings of the Sikh faith which promotes inclusivity and equality for all human beings** - Sikh ethos schools are based on the key principle of treating others in the same manner in which we would like to be treated ourselves. According to Sikh religious philosophy the Divine spark is within all human beings, so it does not make sense to regard oneself as being better than others. We are all the same, according to Sikh teachings, regardless of background, creed, gender or caste. The Sikh faith promotes equality in the most practical of all areas of life.

The all inclusive policy of Sikh ethos schools is based on the egalitarian principles of the Sikh faith. It is clearly portrayed through the fact that the Sikh place of worship, the Gurdwara, is open to all. The distribution of karahprasad (a sweetmeal) and langar (the free kitchen)

in the Gurdwara highlight that all visitors to the Gurdwara are equal. Hence, **Sikh ethos schools reflect Sikhi enshrined principles of liberty, fraternity and equality which ensure no discrimination takes place in respect of gender, faith or ethnicity.** The Sikh Scriptural authority, Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, is the only world scripture that contains the teachings from contributors of more than one faith. In this respect, Sikh ethos is positive towards claims of truth in all faiths. It is truly inclusive in acknowledging that all religious paths lead to the same goal. Hence many Sikhs are involved in interfaith matters around the globe.

**Sikh ethos schools serve the wider community and are not limited to enrolling Sikh students alone. The core values in Sikh ethos schools are assimilated within the British values of wider society** - The philosophical foundation of Sikh ethos schools is based on the tenets of Sikhi. These encourage good citizenship through the principle of Sarbat da bhalla which translates into considering the welfare of humanity as a whole. Equality, integrity and hard work are central to the Sikh way of life.

These values ensue from three fundamental concepts in Sikhi which ensure that Sikhs assimilate within wider society as good citizens. The Sikh concept of Nam Japna (meditation on the Name of God) encourages individual and collective welfare. The Sikh concept of KirtKaro (hard and honest work) guides Sikh ethos schools to place emphasis on each and every child to work to the best of their ability through a nurturing and encouraging environment. The Sikh concept of VandkeChakko (to share) encourages Sikhs to share knowledge, skills, wealth and other resources for the betterment of the wider society, both Sikh and non-Sikh.

The concept of the unity of God according to Sikh teachings is one which sees the world and every material aspect of creation as existing within the Divine. These principles also extend to the wider community by encouraging parents to become fully involved with the life of Sikh ethos schools through both curricular and extra-curricular activities.

**There are fewer Sikh schools than the schools of other faiths** - The British Sikh community needs further support in opening Sikh ethos schools. Sikhs, as a community, proudly assert their British Sikh identity which allows the assimilation of both British as well as Sikh values in the everyday lives of Sikhs in Britain.

Ed Miliband, the Labour Leader commented that 'The British Sikh community has made and continues to make a huge contribution to our nation'. Therefore, more Sikh ethos schools in Britain would nurture pupils to accepting and celebrating the multi-culturally diverse nature of British Society.

Sikh ethos schools would welcome support from public funding to ensure that teaching is high quality, which in turn promotes high moral values amongst pupils. Sikh ethos schools accept pupils of all faiths as well as pupils who profess no faith. The emphasis in Sikh ethos schools is to promote equality of learning for each and every pupil.

## We need 25 state funded Sikh schools by 2020





## SECTION 6 - MONUMENT IN LONDON TO HIGHLIGHT SIKH SACRIFICES IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR

**Allocation of a suitable site in central London for a permanent monument to highlight Sikh sacrifices in the First World War to be funded through public subscriptions**

### Key priorities:

- The UK Government and MPs to encourage the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), Westminster City Council and Greater London Authority to work closely with Sikhs to identify a suitable location in Central London for the erection of a permanent monument that highlights the Sikh contribution to the First World War.
- The UK Government to continue to support relevant events and projects through the Heritage Lottery Fund up to 2018 to commemorate the First World War centenary and honour Sikh sacrifices.

### Background

According to official figures, 138,000 Indian troops fought during the First World War. The contribution of Sikhs is unmeasurable. Although Sikhs were less than two per cent of the population, they made up 20 per cent of the British Army in the Great War. The majority of these Sikh Soldiers never visited the country they were fighting for, yet many sacrificed their lives on the battlefield.

There have already been communications and meetings with DCMS to discuss Sikh sacrifices in the First World War and how different organisations are highlighting this in the 2014-2018 period. Sikhs have also been prominent at national and international events to mark the start and end of the First World War and there has been extensive coverage of these events by the BBC.

**Sikhs: Lions of the Great War** - The UK's first national memorial dedicated to Sikhs who fought during the Great War will be unveiled later this year at a launch event at the National Memorial Arboretum. However, it has been highlighted there is a need for a permanent monument in central London to emphasise Sikh sacrifices under the slogan 'Sikhs: Lions of the Great War'. The plan would be to unveil this towards the end of the 2014-2018 period.

A prime location in London is essential in order for maximum outreach to Sikhs and non-Sikhs. The British Sikh community feel that the Sikh contribution to the First World War has largely been missed from the annals of British history. The monument will explicitly commemorate the bravery of the Sikh soldiers in fighting for Britain during the First World War.

**Iconic site to celebrate the Sikh identity and way of life** - Sikhs will endeavour to create an iconic site which gives visible gratitude and honour to the principles of the Sikh way of life and the Sikh soldiers of the British Army during the First World War. The monument will ensure that there is a greater awareness of the bravery of the Sikh soldiers during the First World War. It will symbolise Sikh loyalty to the British, a contribution that is largely forgotten in British history. It is expected the site of the Sikh soldiers' monument will attract large numbers of Sikhs and non-Sikhs.

**The monument will illustrate the pride that the Sikh soldiers had in their Sikh identity. Thus, turban wearing Sikh soldiers will be a prominent feature of the monument.** This also highlights the recruitment of the Sikhs in the Army during the British Raj. The bravery of the Sikhs as emanating from the wearing of his turban is a principle that was recognised by the British during the Raj. The monument will serve as an important symbol of remembrance for the British Sikh community so that the bravery of the Sikh soldiers, and indeed, of Sikh principles which guided them, are visible for all to appreciate.

**Funded through public subscriptions** - It has been proposed Sikhs will collectively establish a Sikh Memorial Trust, with appropriate patrons, that would take forward the entire project from start to finish, including the funding for the commissioning and installation of the monument through public subscriptions and contributions from entrepreneurs in the British Sikh community. There is however an expectation from the British Sikh community that the UK Government and MPs will be fully supportive of this initiative. DCMS will need to work with Westminster City Council and Greater London Authority to identify a suitable location in central London.

**Supporting relevant events and projects** - Other than the permanent monument in central London different Sikh organisations are planning national and local events, research projects and commemorative ceremonies during the four years of 2014 to 2018 marking the 100th anniversary of the First World War. It is hoped sufficient Heritage Lottery Funding will be made available for these projects. Some events will be official projects at the Imperial War Museum and others in battlefields in Belgium, France and other countries where Sikhs made huge sacrifices, where the War Graves Commission will be involved.

## SECTION 7 - PRESSURE ON FRANCE TO STOP DISCRIMINATION AGAINST TURBAN WEARING SIKHS

**UK Government working with other governments to exert pressure on France and Belgium to honour decisions by the UNHRC with respect to discrimination against turban wearing Sikhs**

### Key priorities:

- The UK Government working with other governments should actively support the rulings by the UNHRC and Belgian Supreme Court which support the case for religious freedom within the EU for turban wearing Sikhs.
- The UK Government should be challenging France and Belgium as their laws and regulations affect the rights of turban wearing British Sikhs to work and settle in these countries.
- The UK Government should influence how other EU countries should approach religious freedoms, especially with respect to the Sikh turban by building on the successful solutions established in the UK.

### Background

**Supporting the UNHRC judgements against France** - The French believe the display of religious symbols is against their secular cultural requirements. The French amended their code of education that expands principles found in existing French law, especially the constitutional requirement of *laïcité* - the separation of state and religious activities.

Under the EU anti-discrimination Employment directive and the 2009 anti-discrimination directive, those in European countries such as France, should have similar freedoms to practice their faith as in the UK. In 2012 the UNHRC ruled that France's ban on the wearing of the turban in schools violated Sikhs' right to practise their religion. This right is protected by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

The UNHRC stated that France had 'not furnished compelling evidence' that a Sikh pupil wearing a turban would have posed a threat to the rights and freedoms of other pupils or to order at the school. The Committee also considered that the penalty of permanent exclusion had not been shown to be necessary, and that it had been imposed not because of any harmful conduct by the Sikh pupil, but because he belonged to a broad category of people by their religious conduct. In

the Committee's view, France had not shown 'how the sacrifice of those persons' rights is either necessary or proportionate to the benefits achieved'. The committee accepted that France was entitled to uphold the principles of secularism, but this was not enough to justify the interference on religious rights the law represented.

The UNHRC has also concluded that France had violated the religious freedom of another Sikh, Ranjit Singh, when he was asked to remove his turban for an ID photograph. It found that requiring the applicant to remove his turban for an identification photo violated his right to freedom of religion. The Committee held that the State had failed to show that the interference was necessary for public safety.

**There are a total of three UNHRC rulings that make very clear that the French restrictions on the Sikh turban in education and on pictures for passports, ID card and driving licences constitute religious discrimination.** The UK Government needs to work with other governments to see how France can be persuaded to honour the rulings by the UNHRC.

**Supporting the Belgian Supreme Court judgement** - In 2013 the Flanders board of community education issued a circular banning religious symbols for students and staff in all its schools. The ban prohibited Sikh pupils from wearing the turban or patka. In October 2014, turban wearing Sikhs argued before the Belgium Supreme Court that the ban violated their freedom of religion under Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights. The Court concluded that the ban interfered with the applicants' freedom of religion and was 'not necessary in a democratic society' and therefore annulled the ban.

**Challenging France and Belgium as their laws and regulations restrict the right of British Sikhs to settle and work in these countries** - The UK Government should consider challenging France and Belgium as their laws and regulations affect the rights of British Sikhs who have the right to settle and work in these countries. This right becomes meaningless for turban wearing Sikhs if their children cannot go to school or university and when they may be prevented from taking up all public sector jobs as turban wearing Sikhs.

**Promoting the UK's approach to the rights of turban-wearing Sikhs** - The UK has a long established Sikh community and the religious freedoms of individuals are protected through judgements made in past cases. Sikh pupils in UK schools have the right to wear their turbans. The UK Government should strongly encourage and influence other EU countries, such as France and Belgium, with less established Sikh communities to explore how similar approaches could be adopted.



## SECTION 8 - INDEPENDENT PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO UK GOVERNMENT ACTIONS IN THE LEAD UP TO AND AFTER THE 1984 SIKH GENOCIDE

**Independent public inquiry into the actions of the UK Government in the lead up to and after the June and November 1984 Sikh Genocide, including restrictions imposed on British Sikhs following pressure by India**

### Key priorities:

- Independent public inquiry looking at an extended time period to establish the reasons, including commercial interests, for the UK Government's military advice in planning an attack on the Sikhs' holiest shrine in June 1984.
- Restoring community confidence by establishing and acknowledging the threats and intimidation by the Indian authorities to systematically demonise and restrict the rights of the minority Sikh community in the UK, and removing unnecessary restrictions that remain on law-abiding Sikhs and Sikh organisations.

### Background

There was widespread shock in January 2014 when papers released under the 30-year rule revealed that the UK Government had directly assisted the Indian authorities in helping to plan the Indian army assault on Sri Harmandir Sahib (often referred to as the Golden Temple Complex) that led to the massacre of thousands of innocent Sikh pilgrims.

The Prime Minister immediately asked the Cabinet Secretary, Sir Jeremy Heywood, to carry out an internal review. However, before the report was published and presented to Parliament with unprecedented speed, concerns were publicly expressed about the narrow terms of reference for the review. In particular the review had inherent limitations as it only examined files and documents available from December 1983 through to June 1984.

Matters that were raised before the review was completed were intentionally excluded by adopting the narrow timeframe. For example, Cabinet papers in the months before December 1983 when defence-related sales to India were discussed would have cast serious

doubt on the conclusion that there was no evidence that the UK provided military advice to advance commercial objectives.

Similarly, Cabinet papers from November 1984 were brought to the attention of the Cabinet Secretary and clearly showed the British cabinet were under pressure from India with respect to trade of £5bn. This led the Metropolitan Police Commissioner and the Home Secretary to restrict the rights of British Sikhs by banning a religious procession to celebrate the birth of the first Sikh Guru, Guru Nanak Dev Ji, in London.

Despite the review and report, details of the specific military advice given has still not been revealed, nor has the reason why the UK Government agreed to advise the Indian government on how to attack the Sikhs' holiest shrine. The UK Government has refused all requests to make the SAS officer's report public, ostensibly protecting his identity, but suggesting there is something to hide. The internal review was incomplete and has proved to be unsatisfactory. Due to deliberate omissions many questions remain unanswered including whether Parliament was misled.

**Support for an independent public inquiry** - The campaign for an independent public inquiry received considerable support in the run up to the European Parliament Elections in May 2014 and around the 30th anniversary of the June 1984 attack. **This included an absolute commitment from the Scottish Government for the UK Government to conduct an independent, fair and transparent inquiry and the backing of over 200 UK politicians MPs, MEPs, Prospective Parliamentary Candidates, MSPs and Welsh Assembly members from nine political parties representing over 10 million voters.** With the release of the Sikh Manifesto the number demanding an independent public inquiry could easily double compelling the next government to respond positively to the calls for a proper inquiry.

**Recent disclosures and files withheld** - More recently the disclosure of Cabinet papers from 1985 show how India continued to use potential arms sales to force the UK Government to try and curb activities of British Sikhs, such as peaceful demonstrations or even the naming of a Sikh Sports Tournament and pressure on the BBC not to provide coverage of such events. Of even more concern is information now being deliberately withheld. Four files have recently been withheld: three from the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) listed as 'temporarily retained', and one from the Cabinet Office described as 'retained under section 3(4) of the Public Records Act, 1958'.

The three PMO files withheld are: 'Visit to UK by LK Jha, member of the Brandt Commission and adviser to Indira Gandhi: meetings with Prime Minister' (04/07/1983-21/03/1985); 'UK/Indian relations: situation in Punjab, activities of Sikh extremists; proposed visit to UK by Rajiv Gandhi in June 1985; part 4' (05/03/1984-22/05/1985); and 'Assassination of Indira Gandhi, October 1984: Prime Minister's visit to India to India to attend funeral' (31/10/1984-12/12/1984). The Cabinet Office file withheld is listed as 'India: Political' (04/05/1979-08/08/1985).

The latest revelations and files withheld are giving new momentum to the call for an independent public inquiry into the role of the UK Government in the mid-1980s. The information now in the public domain shows the British Sikh community were not only let down by the UK Government 30 years ago, but also systematically demonised at the request of the Indian authorities in exchange for promises of trade.

**Loss of community confidence** - The absence of an independent public inquiry has led to a loss of confidence and speculation that the UK Government always puts trade interests with India before the interests of its own British Sikh citizens. At various times it has been reported India has been pressuring the UK Government to restrict the activities of Sikh activists in the UK, such as candlelit vigils outside the UK Parliament for those on death row in India and the huge annual remembrance event in London in June. It is now also being assumed some law-abiding Sikhs who remain politically active that have been constantly denied British nationality for the last 30 years and Sikh organisations that have been and remain banned by the UK Government are to appease the Indian authorities.

There continues to be a demand for a comprehensive independent public inquiry. The present UK Government bears no responsibility for the tragic events of 1984 or subsequent actions that may have been taken to restrict the rights of British Sikhs. Nevertheless, the next UK Government has a continuing responsibility to address the serious questions and considerable concerns which many continue to have about what happened 30 years ago.

Community confidence needs to be restored by establishing and acknowledging the threats and intimidation by the Indian authorities to systematically demonise and restrict the rights of the minority Sikh community in the UK. This will only be achieved by removing any unnecessary restrictions that remain on law-abiding Sikhs, such as denial of British nationality and lifting the ban on Sikh organisations where it is clear those organisations do not satisfy the statutory threshold for proscription.



**The UK Government admitted complicity in operation Bluestar – how can it deny an independent public inquiry?**



## SECTION 9 - UN-LED INQUIRY INTO THE 1984 SIKH GENOCIDE

**UK Government recognition of the events of June and November 1984 as Sikh Genocide and backing for a UN-led inquiry into the atrocities committed by the Indian authorities**

### Key priorities:

- The UK Government and MPs accept the series of events in June 1984, the killings and disappearances in the months that followed and the systematic and deliberate killing of innocent Sikhs in November 1984, separately and collectively constitute Genocide.
- The UK Government joins other countries to call for a UN-led inquiry into the atrocities committed by the Indian authorities in 1984.
- The UK Government backs relevant UN rapporteurs and independent experts to carry out independent investigations into the torture, disappearances, false encounters, extra-judicial executions and use by the police of criminals, goons, gangsters and smugglers to impersonate Sikh 'militants', widely known as Black Cats.

### Background

The term genocide was coined in 1943 by the Jewish-Polish lawyer Raphael Lemkin who combined the Greek word 'genos' (race or tribe) with the Latin word 'cide' (to kill). Article Two of the UN Convention on Genocide 1948 defines genocide as 'any of the following acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group, as such'

- Killing members of the group
- Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group
- Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part
- Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group
- Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group

Using the above definition the following acts individually and collectively in 1984 amount to Genocide:

### i) Operation Bluestar

This began on June 1st 1984. Up to 150,000 Indian army troops were sent to the northern Indian state of Punjab, the Sikh homeland, equipped with helicopter gunships and tanks. Punjab was cut off from the rest of the world. 24-hour curfews were imposed, all telephone and telex lines cut, all Indian journalists were expelled and orders to shoot on site were widely carried out. As the Christian Science Monitor stated on 8 June 1984 'the whole of Punjab, with its 5,000 villages and 50 major cities, was turned into a concentration camp'.

Over 125 other Sikh shrines were simultaneously attacked on the false pretext of apprehending 'a handful of militants' lodged inside the Sri Harmandir Sahib or Golden Temple Complex in Amritsar. The Indian army unleashed a terror unprecedented in post-independence India. Tanks let loose a barrage of highly explosive shells, which destroyed the Akal Takht, the temporal seat of the Sikhs. The timing chosen for the attack was when Sikhs were marking the Martyrdom of the Fifth Guru, Guru Arjan Dev Ji when it was known tens of thousands of pilgrims would be in Amritsar. Thousands of innocent Sikh pilgrims – men, women and children were killed, some shot at point blank range with their hands tied behind their backs with their turbans. An estimated ten thousand pilgrims never returned to claim their shoes.

### ii) Operation Woodrose

The Indian military operation in the countryside that followed when tens of thousands of Sikhs, overwhelmingly young men, were detained for interrogation and subsequently tortured and many killed. According to Dr. Sangat Singh, Joint Intelligence Committee, about 100,000 youth were taken into custody within first four to six weeks of the operation and that many of them were not heard of again.

### iii) November 1984 systematic killing of innocent Sikhs across India

The systematic and deliberate killing of an estimated 30,000 Sikhs (most burnt alive) in November 1984 in 18 states and over 130 cities across India. Sikhs on public roads were burnt alive, dragged out from trains and lynched on the railway platforms and set on fire. Property worth millions was looted and destroyed. Hundreds of Sikh women were gang raped by goons, police officers and civil administrators. Small children were ruthlessly killed by pulling their legs apart while their mothers were being raped. More than 300,000 Sikhs were displaced and rendered homeless. Hundreds

of Gurdwaras and our living Guru, Guru Granth Sahib Ji was burnt and desecrated in a systematic and planned way across India.

**The Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh in late December 2014 referred to what happen to the Sikhs in November 1984 as 'Genocide' and that 'justice would be meted out to the victims only when the perpetrators of the crime are punished' and 'that until these persons are punished, victims will not get relief'.** This development now makes it straightforward for the UK Government and MPs to refer to the killing of Sikhs in November 1984 as Genocide.

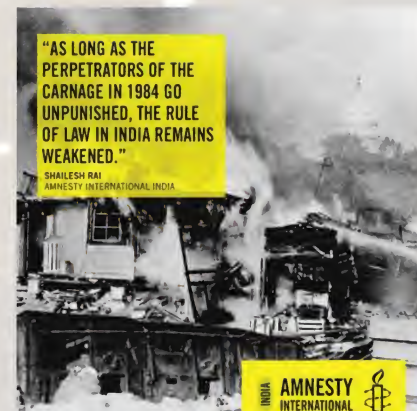
30 years later there have been no independent inquiries in India into what happen in June 1984 or what followed. India's judicial system and ten commissions have failed to bring justice to the victims of November 1984. After 30 years the organisers and perpetrators of the Genocide roam free, instead they have been promoted and held positions of power. A UN-led inquiry is needed into the atrocities committed by the Indian authorities in 1984.

For over 30 years UN rapporteurs and independent experts as well as Amnesty International have been denied access to Punjab to investigate widespread allegations of torture, disappearances, false encounters and extra-judicial executions. If India wishes to be taken seriously at the UN it must remove such restrictions, improve its human rights record and sign and ratify a range of UN conventions.

30 years on from these tragic incidents, although the pain of injustice is still strong with Sikhs across the globe, there is also a genuine hope of restitution and reconciliation, so that future Sikh generations can move forward and live without fear and with freedom.

As in many international examples of political or racial conflicts where peaceful resolutions have been successful the first step has always been international admission of the truth by the country concerned, the release of all political prisoners who in some cases have been incarcerated for 20-25 years and a general amnesty for those that have cases pending.

This is where the UK Government and the international community have a responsibility to find viable solutions following the precedents set elsewhere.



**Even the Indian Government are now calling 1984 a Genocide, time for the UK & UN to follow**



## SECTION 10 - APPLICATION OF SELF DETERMINATION TO THE SIKHS

### UK Government recognition and support for the application of self determination to the Sikhs

#### Key priorities:

- The UK Government and MPs accept the general principle that self determination is a basic human right and it applies to the Sikhs.
- The UK Government joins other countries, such as France, Germany and the Netherlands to challenge India at the UN Human Rights Committee to withdraw its 'reservation' that self determination does not apply to the people of India.
- The UK Government accepts India has lost the right to rely on the territorial integrity argument by oppressing peoples within its territory, including the minority Sikh community and has failed to respect the political and human rights of the Sikhs in the Indian Constitution.
- The UK Government acknowledges the Anglo-Sikh friendship treaties, admiration and appreciation of the Sikhs loyalty, huge contribution and sacrifices in the World Wars and discussions it presided over prior to the creation of India and Pakistan in 1947, including the specific offer of a separate Sikh homeland and a ten year agreement of military assistance and support for the Sikh administration.
- The UK Government accepts it has a historic and moral responsibility towards the Sikhs to help through diplomatic means to resolve a conflict that still continues and whilst not committing itself to any particular outcome appreciates international law allows for the Sikhs to exercise the right to self-determination.

#### Background

**Acceptance of the general principle** - Self determination is a basic human right founded in international law on which other human rights depend. The UN Human Rights Committee has stressed that the right of self-determination is absolutely fundamental to the protection of individual rights. All nations belonging to the UN are obliged to respect this right.

**Sikhs satisfy the definition of a people or a nation** - The Sikhs, with a unique spiritual and temporal philosophy (the Miri-Piri principle), together with a distinct linguistic and cultural tradition, developed into an indigenous, freedom loving sovereign nation that first secured political power in the form of an

independent state in 1710 CE. The larger sovereign Sikh state established in 1799 CE was recognised by all the world powers as a subject of international law and was party to several Treaties with the British. As well as being recognised as a people or a nation by others the Sikhs, crucially in the context of the criterion of self identification, see themselves as such. Whilst the Sikhs are clear about their nationhood, they find that it is denied by the Indian State.

#### India must withdraw its 'reservation' that self determination does not apply to the people of India

- On ratifying the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in 1966 India made a 'reservation' to the effect that the right of self determination pertains only to 'peoples under foreign domination', it is not relevant with regard to 'sovereign independent States or to a section of a people or nation—which is the essence of national integrity'. France, Germany and the Netherlands objected to the reservation on the ground that self determination applies to all peoples, but India insisted on making that reservation. Subsequently, the UN Human Rights Committee has stated in its review of India's compliance with Article 1 which deals with self-determination that it 'invites the State party [India] to review these reservations and declarations with a view to withdrawing them, so as to ensure progress in the implementation of the rights ...' India has not made any such withdrawal. India's position is contrary to the law of self determination. Whilst India may have an expedient interpretation of the law to suit its own needs, it is nevertheless bound by international law and the international community must insist that the law is upheld.

#### India has lost the territorial integrity argument by oppressing peoples within its territory

- A part of the general limitation on the right of self-determination is the specific limitation of territorial integrity. The 1970 Declaration of Principles of International Law provides that the right of self-determination shall not 'be construed as authorising or encouraging any action which would dismember or impair, totally or in part, the territorial integrity or political unity of sovereign and independent States'. This limitation is an extension of the desire in most societies to create a social and legal system which is relatively stable.

However, the territorial integrity limitation cannot be asserted in all situations. The Declaration of Principles of International Law provides that only 'States conducting themselves in compliance with the principle of equal rights and self-determination of people' can rely on this limitation.

The 'territorial integrity' objection to groups seeking to exercise self-determination by means of secession is only arguable if a State has not oppressed the peoples living within it and where those peoples have had their political and human rights respected in the constitutional set-up in that State. The level of oppression of the Sikhs in Punjab and elsewhere in India (especially during the period 1984 to 1995) has been severe. The systematic violations of "individual" human rights such as genocide and other crimes against humanity, such as extra-judicial killings, disappearances, torture, rape and illegal detention has left Sikhs traumatised. Observers of the Sikh situation will be aware that the 'territorial integrity' objection cannot be afforded to India.

#### The Anglo-Sikh relationship has existed for over 200 years and based on a number of friendship treaties.

The British rulers of India studied the Sikh religious history and their proud military tradition won the respect of the British military commanders, politicians and scholars alike. Hundreds of thousands of Sikhs answered the call of Britain and the Allies in both world wars with over 83,000 turban-wearing Sikhs sacrificing their lives, with over 109,000 wounded.

The Sikhs played a leading role in the struggle for independence from the British. They made sacrifices wholly out of proportion to their demographic strength (the Sikhs make up less than 2% of the Indian population). Out of 2,125 killed, 1,550 (73%) were Sikhs, out of 2,646 deported for life to the Andaman Islands, 2,147 (80%) were Sikhs and out of 127 sent to the gallows, 92 (80%) were Sikhs. The Sikhs were therefore the third party with whom the British negotiated for the transfer of power and offered a separate Sikh homeland and a ten year agreement of military assistance and support for the Sikh administration. The Sikh leadership at the time accepted promises and solemn assurances made by the leaders of India, but the latter reneged on these promises. When India adopted its first Constitution and was declared a Republic on 26 January 1950 Sikhs refused to sign, accept or endorse the Constitution contending it did not have any legal safeguards for the culture, language and religion of the Sikhs.

The right of self-determination can take a variety of forms, from autonomy over most policies and laws in a region or part of a state; to a people having exclusive control over only certain aspects of policy; such as education, social and/or cultural matters. The type of arrangements applicable to any given situation will usually depend on the constitutional order of the state concerned.

The right of self-determination does not imply that independence, or secession from an independent State, is the only, or even the necessary and appropriate,

means of exercising the right. There may be other structures or arrangements that satisfy the demands of those who exercise the right of self-determination.

The Sikhs have, since 1947, made substantial efforts aimed at securing 'internal self determination' within India. That is a matter which has been recorded in a great deal of literature about the problem. The Sikh demands for autonomy or internal self-determination were not only rejected by the Indian State; Indian politicians responded by criminalising Sikh aspirations and trying to neutralise them by the use of force (state terrorism), eventually on a massive scale. India incorrectly labels self-determination activists as extremists.

**Experts on self-determination assert that when internal self-determination is violently rejected and crushed with state terror, the oppressed peoples or nations have little option but to seek remedy via external self-determination.** The international law formulation on self-determination underpins that view. That is the basis on which the Sikhs themselves have raised the demand for an independent state.

The classic mechanism for implementing the right to self-determination is the use of a plebiscite. This was seen in the original UN resolutions on Kashmir in 1948 and the more recent UN led independence process for East Timor or the referendum in Scotland. The Sikhs have not of course been offered the opportunity but it is interesting to note that the former UK Indian High Commissioner, Kuldeep Nayar has admitted that if, after the horrors of 1984, the Sikhs were given a plebiscite they would have gone for an independent state.



**Every individual has the right to determine their own future....suppression is the crime not the demand**



# 50 Target Seats - The Sikh Battle grounds

#	CONSTITUENCY	MAJORITY	SITTING MP/PARTY	CANDIDATES
1	Wolverhampton South West (Con)	691	UPPAL, Paul	Marris, Robert
2	Brentford & Isleworth (Con)	1,958	MACLEOD, Mary	Cadbury, Ruth
3	North Warwickshire (Con)	54	TRACY, Craig	O'Brien, Michael
4	Solihull (LD)	175	BURT, Lorely	Knight, Julian
5	Derby North (Lab)	613	WILLIAMSON, Christopher	Solloway, Amanda/ Care, Lucy
6	Walsall North (Lab)	990	WINNICK, David	Hansen-Luke, Douglas
7	Walsall South (Lab)	1,755	VAZ, Valerie Carol	Arnold, Sue
8	Bradford East (LD)	365	WARD, David	Hussain, Imran/ Ahmed, Iftikar
9	Warwick & Leamington (Con)	1,513	WHITE, Christopher	Kelly, Lynette
10	Birmingham, Edgbaston (Lab)	1,274	STUART, Gisela	Evans, Luke/ Dargue, Lee
11	Dudley North (Lab)	649	AUSTIN, Ian	Amin, Afzal
12	Feltham & Heston (Lab)	4,658	MALHOTRA, Seema	Nayyar, Simon
13	Slough (Lab)	5,523	MACTAGGART, Fiona	Singh, Gurcharan
14	Bedford (Con)	1,353	FULLER, Richard	Hall, Patrick
15	Wolverhampton North East (Lab)	2,484	REYNOLDS, Emma	Henry, Darren
16	Ealing, Southall (Lab)	9,291	SHARMA, Virendra	Symes, James
17	Thurrock (Con)	92	DOYLE-PRICE, Jacqueline	Billington, Polly
18	Broxtowe (Con)	389	SOUBRY, Anna	Palmer, Nick
19	Southampton, Itchen (Lab)	192	DAVIS, Rowenna	Smith, Royston
20	Stockton South (Con)	332	WHARTON, James	Baldock, Louise
21	Hendon (Con)	106	OFFORD, Matthew	Dismore, Andrew
22	Hampstead & Kilburn (Lab)	42	SIDDIQ, Tulip	Marcus, Simon/ Nawaz, Maajid
23	Wolverhampton South East (Lab)	6,593	MCFADDEN, Patrick	Photay, Suria
24	West Bromwich East (Lab)	6,696	WATSON, Tom	Secombe, Olivia
25	Telford (Lab)	978	WRIGHT, David	Allan, Lucy
26	Coventry South (Lab)	3,845	COLLONY, Eleanor	Ridley, Gary
27	Cardiff North (Con)	194	WILLIAMS, Criag	Williams, Mari
28	Hayes & Harlington (Lab)	10,824	MCDONNELL, John	Lewis, Pearl
29	Sherwood (Con)	214	SPENCER, Mark	Mathers, Leonie
30	Warley (Lab)	10,756	SPELLAR, John	Williams, Tom
31	Ilford South (Lab)	11,287	GAPES, Michael	TBC
32	Derby South (Lab)	6,122	BECKETT, Margaret	Williams, Evonne/ Naitta, Joe
33	West Bromwich West (Lab)	5,651	BAILEY, Adrian	Ratner, Paul/ Eardley, Graham
34	Gravesham (Con)	9,321	HOLLOWAY, Adam	Dhesi, Tanmanjeet Singh
35	Nottingham South (Lab)	1,722	GREENWOOD, Lillian	Hunt, Jane
36	Leeds North East (Lab)	4,545	UZIELL-HAMILTON, Alan	Choudhry, Aqila/ Wilson, Simon
37	Southampton, Test (Lab)	2,413	WHITEHEAD, Alan	Moulton, Jeremy
38	Ilford North (Con)	5,404	SCOTT, Lee	Streeting, Wes
39	Birmingham, Perry Barr (Lab)	11,908	MAHMOOD, Khalid	Hodiva, Charlotte
40	Norwich South (LD)	310	WRIGHT, Simon	Townesend, Lisa/ Lewis, Clive
41	Coventry North West (Lab)	6,288	ROBINSON, Geoffrey	Akhtar, Parvez
42	Birmingham, Yardley (LD)	3,002	HEMMING, John	Phillips, Jesse
43	Harborough (Con)	9,797	GARNIER, Edward	Meghani, Sundip/ Haq, Zuffar
44	Eltham (Lab)	1,663	EFFORD, Clive	Dury, Spencer
45	Coventry North East (Lab)	11,775	Fletcher, Colleen	Lowe, Michelle
46	Leicester East (Lab)	14,082	VAZ, Keith	Devani, Kishan
47	Harrow West (Lab)	3,143	THOMAS, Gareth	David, Hannah
48	Erith & Thamesmead (Lab)	5,703	PEARCE, Teresa	Firth, Anna
49	Leicester West (Lab)	4,017	KENDALL, Liz	Bessant, Paul
50	Luton South (Lab)	2,329	SHUKER, Gavin	Redmond, Katie

## How to use the Sikh Manifesto

	Individuals	Gurdwara / Organisation	MP or PPC
1 Encourage Sikh voter registration by 20 April 2015 deadline	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2 All share and become familiar with the Sikh Manifesto	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3 Make sure each of the main candidates has a hard copy or pdf version of the Sikh Manifesto	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 Invite the main candidates to the Gurdwara to discuss the Sikh Manifesto	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 Ask each of the main candidates to clarify the <u>position of their party</u> with respect to the 10-points in the Sikh Manifesto	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6 Ask each of the main candidates to clarify their <u>personal position</u> with respect to the 10-points in the Sikh Manifesto	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7 Invite local newspapers, local radio etc. to give your views on the party and candidate that is likely to best serve the local Sikh community.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 Share your thoughts and view of each candidate with friends and family	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 Feedback any commitments made by the candidates to The Sikh Network	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 Encourage all Sikhs to turn out to Vote and have your say	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>